

Message Text

PAGE 01 SAIGON 05724 051413 Z

44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 AID-20 IO-12 DPW-01 RSR-01 /115 W

----- 116932

P R 051141 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9705

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5724

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT DAILY MR III SITREP - 5 APRIL 1973

FOLLOWING MSG REC FROM AMCONSUL BIEN HOA ON APR 5 ACTION
EMBASSY SAIGON REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BIEN HOA 0055

SUBJ: DAILY MR III SITREP - 5 APRIL 1973

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VC

1. THERE IS JOY IN MINHVILLE OVER THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE WHICH CAME OUT OF THE THIEU- NIXON TALKS IN SAN CLEMENTE. SEVERAL PEOPLE CLOSE TO III CORPS HEAD LTG NGUYEN VAN MINH EXPRESSED ELATION OVER THE SECTION WHICH MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS DETERMINED TO DO WHAT WAS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE EFFICACY OF THE PARIS ACCORD. MINH' S KEY INTELLIGENCE OPERATOR TOLD THE CONGEN THAT THE EARLIER STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO DEFENSE SECRETARY RICHARDSON WARNING HANOI THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT HESITATE TO TAKE STEPS TO DAMPEN HANOI' S ENTHUSIASM HELPED IMMEASURABLY TO REASSURE THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS STILL INTERESTED IN THEIR WELFARE. MINH HIMSELF, THOUGH EAGER TO DO WHAT IS REQUIRED WITHOUT OUTSIDE HELP, WELCOMED THE WORDS " ACTIONS WHICH WOULD THREATEN THE BASIS OF THE AGREEMENT WOULD CALL FOR APPROPRIATE VIGOROUS ACTIONS," AND HOPED THAT HANOI WOULD DECIDE
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 05724 051413 Z

TO HONOR THE CEASE- FIRE NOW THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE ITS
POSITION CLEAR ON WHAT MAY HAPPEN IF HANOI CONTINUES ON ITS

PRESENT COURSE.

2. TAY NINH PROVINCE ADDS ITSELF TO THE LIST OF PROVINCES BEGINNING TO ORGANIZE FOR THIS SPRING'S VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS, WHICH IN TAY NINH WILL BE HELD ON MAY 13 AND 20 IN 25 OF THE 28 VILLAGES. THE NEW POLITICAL PARTY CALLED THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE PLANS TO CONTEST AT LEAST SOME OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL SEATS IN TAY NINH, ALTHOUGH ALLIANCE MEMBERS BELIEVE THAT THE CLOSE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE GRVN APPARATUS AND THE DEMOCRACY PARTY WILL ENSURE VICTORY FOR MOST DEMOCRACY PARTY CANDIDATES.

3. PHUOC LONG PROVINCE CHIEF COL. LUU YEM APRIL 4 TOLD BIEN HOA INTERPROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE AND CONSUL THAT HE EXPECTS AN ATTACK ON PHUOC BINH AND SONG BE TOWNS APRIL 10-15 BY A COMMUNIST DIVISION- EQUIVALENT FORCE WITH TANKS AND HEAVY LONG- RANGE ARTILLERY. YEM GAVE US AN OVERLAY DEPICTING THE 272 ND REGIMENT TO THE SOUTHEAST WITH ABOUT 50 T-54 TANKS, READY TO ROLL UP PHUOC QUAN VILLAGE AND PHUOC BINH DISTRICT TOWN, AND THE 271 ST TO THE NORTHWEST READY TO GOBBLE UP SONG BE ITSELF. HE ALSO PUTS A REGIMENT OF THE NVA 9 TH DIVISION IN POSITION TO SUPPORT THE ATTACK, AND BELIEVES THAT 9 TH DIVISION'S HEADQUARTERS IS NOW LOCATED IN BO DUC DISTRICT, ALONG WITH 130 MM ARTILLERY, NEVER SEEN IN MR III UNTIL VERY RECENTLY. FOR DEFENSE, COL. YEM HAS ONLY THE TERRITORIAL FORCES PLUS TWO RATHER DEPLETED RANGER BATTALIONS, AND HE HAS ASKED MR III CG MINH FOR THREE MORE UP- TO- STRENGTH BATTALIONS, BUT HE CONFIDED THAT HE WILL BE LUCKY TO GET ONE OR TWO. HE THOUGHT THE NVA WANTED TO ATTACK JUST BEFORE THE RAINY SEASON, IN THE HOPE THAT ONCE THEY GOT IN, IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO USE AIR POWER EFFECTIVELY TO DISLODGE THEM. HE BELIEVES THE PURPOSE OF THE ATTACK IS TO TAKE OVER ENOUGH TERRITORY IN NORTHERN MR III TO FORM A REASONABLY LARGE PROVINCE, WITH LOC NINH AS ITS CAPITAL, FROM THE NORTHERN PARTS OF TAY NINH, BINH LONG, AND PHUOC LONG PROVINCES, WHICH WILL STRENGTHEN THE PRG'S HAND AT THE CURRENT BILATERAL PARIS TALKS AND PROVIDE THEM WITH A FAIRLY LARGE BASE AREA INTO WHICH THEY CAN MOVE THEIR ARMY AND RESETTLE SOLDIERS' FAMILIES, ETHNIC VIETNAMESE FROM CAMBODIA, AND OTHERS. (COMMENT: OTHER INTELLIGENCE AVAILABLE TO US CONFIRMS A BIG COMMUNIST BUILDUP IN BO DUC DISTRICT AND SUPPORTS COL. YEM'S HYPOTHESIS ABOUT COMMUNIST INTENTIONS. BUT THE COMMUNISTS MAY BE BLUFFING IN CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 05724 051413 Z

OTHER TO KEEP LTG MINH FROM COMMITTING ENOUGH FORCES TO RELIEVE TON LE CHAM, AND CERTAINLY COL. YEM'S WARNINGS TEND TO BE DISCOUNTED AT MR III HQ AS ALARMIST.)

4. COL. YEM WAS MOST ANXIOUS TO GET THE ICCS OR SOME PART OF IT TO VISIT SONG BE BEFORE THE ATTACK SO THAT IT COULD CONFIRM A VIOLATION AFTERWARDS. HE SAID THE ICCS HAS NOT YET VISITED PHUOC LONG, AND DURING THE LIFE OF THE AN LOC FPJMC ONLY THE AMERICAN ELEMENT VISITED PHUOC LONG. COL. YEM BECAME INCREASINGLY DEPRESSED AS WE TOLD HIM ABOUT ICCS DELAYS IN GOING INTO AN LOC,

GENERAL PATTERN OF OBSTRUCTIONISM BY COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS, ICCS REQUIREMENT THAT INVESTIGATIONS BE CONDUCTED ONLY AT REQUEST OF JMC, WHICH DOES NOT EXIST IN REGIONS AT THE MOMENT, ETC. WE TOLD HIM WE ARE IMPRESSING URGENCY OF PHUOC LONG SITUATION ON REGION V CANDEL CHIEF, AND THAT THERE WAS SOME HOPE THAT CANADIAN ANDPERHAPS INDONESIAN ELEMENTS OF AN LOC TEAM WOULD GO UP BEFORE END OF WEEK.

5. AT 1400 APRIL 3 SOME TEN PEOPLE SAYING THEY WERE FROM BINH TUY PROVINCE PROTESTED COMMUNIST CEASE- FIRE VIOLATIONS, PARTICULARLY TON LE CHAM, IN FRONT OF THE ICCS REGION V HEAD-QUARTERS IN BIEN HOA. THE DEMONSTRATION LASTED FOR ONLY A FEW MINUTES. BINH TUY IS IN TRUCE REGION IV, BUT AT LEAST THE DEMONSTRATORS HAD THE REGIONAL ICCS THAT HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF TON LE CHAM.

6. DURING THE 24 HOUR PERIOD ENDING AT 1000 APRIL 5, TON LE CHAM BASE CAMP RECEIVED THREE ATTACKS BY FIRE (ABF) TOTALING 120 ROUNDS OF MIXED MORTAR AND ARTILLERY. TWO RANGERS WERE WOUNDED AND A QUANTITY OF THEIR 81 MM MORTAR AMMUNITIONS WAS DESTROYED. THERE WERE NO GROUND ATTACKS. IN PHUOC LONG PROVINCE NVA/ VC PRESSURE CONTINUED AT AN INCREASING LEVEL. THERE WERE TWO LIGHT ABF AGAINST THE 341 ST RF AND 97 TH RANGER BATTALIONS OPERATING THREE KILOMETERS OUTSIDE PHUOC BINH CITY, WHICH WOUNDED ONE RANGER. THE 73 RD RANGER BATTALION, OPERATING THREE KILOMETERS NORTHEAST OF PHUOC BINH, RECEIVED A GROUND ATTACK AT 1135 APRIL 4 FROM AN UNKNOWN-SIZE NVA/ VC FORCE, WHICH LOST SEVEN MEN KILLED, WHILE THE RANGERS LOST ONE KILLED AND HAD 13 WOUNDED. THE PROVINCE CHIEF HAD OVER 50 ROUNDS OF 155 MM HOWITZER AND FOUR VNAF A1 E SKYRAIDER TACAIR STRIKES PUT IN ON NVA/ VC STAGING AREAS YESTERDAY, WHICH PRODUCED SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS AND SUSTAINED FIRES. ELSEWHERE IN MR III THERE WERE FOUR LIGHT ABF AND THREE MINOR GROUND CONTACTS. 20
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 SAIGON 05724 051413 Z

ROUNDS OF 82 MM MORTAR WERE FIRED INTO THE KHIEM HANH DISTRICT COMPOUND IN TAY NINH PROVINCE, WOUNDING ONE ARVN SOLDIER. AN AT-3 ANTITANK MISSILE WAS FIRED AT A RECONNAISSANCE UNIT OF THE ARVN 49 TH REGIMENT 11 KILOMETERS NORTH OF TAY NINH CIYT. ONE M-113 ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER WAS LIGHTLY DAMANGED BUT FIVE ARVN SOLDIERS WERE KILLED AND EIGHT WOUNDED. MR III HEADQUARTERS REPORTS ALL ROADS OPEN TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC EXCEPT HIGHWAY 13 BETWEEN LAI KHE AND CHON THANH. IN SOUTHER BIEN HOA PROVINCE, HOWEVER, INTERPORVINCIAL HIGHWAY 25 WAS BLOCKED BY THE VC THE NIGHT OF APRIL 2-3.

7. LTC HUYNH BUU SON ARRIVED IN PHUOC TUY PROVINCE YESTERDAY TO TAKE OVER AS PROVINCE CHIEF, REPLACING LTC TRAN DINH BICH. THE FORMAL CEREMONIES ARE SCHEDULED FOR TOMORROW MORNING.
WALKINSHAW
WHITEHOUSE

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 07 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: hilburpw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON05724
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730460/abqcehpf.tel
Line Count: 165
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hilburpw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Aug-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <23-Nov-2001 by hilburpw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971201
Subject: SUBJECT DAILY MR III SITREP - 5 APRIL 1973
TAGS: MILI, PINS, VS, MILI, PINT
To: STATE INFO JEC PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005